creation of National Wetland Authority, National Wetlands Biodiversity Register, prioritization of wetlands and capacity building in management planning of wetlands.

(e) The details of wetlands with reference to time-frames of 1st January, 1980 and 1st January, 2005 are not available in the absence of any specific study in this regard.

Guidelines allowing developmental/construction activities in forests

1898. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 517 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 4th March, 2005 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has also allowed to cut trees in the forest areas;

(b) whether any consultations with the State Governments have been held in this respect; and

(c) if so, the outcome of such consultations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) On the persistent requests of the various State/UT Governments, and various Central Government Ministries, the Ministry of Environment and Forests *vide* letter dated 03.01.2005, considered general approval under Section 2 of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, and permitted the State/UT Governments to proceed with need based diversion of forest land below one hectare in each case, in favour of Government Departments for construction of public welfare amenities like schools, dispensary/hospital, electric and telecommunication lines, drinking water projects, water/rainwater harvesting structures, minor irrigation canal, non-conventional sources of energy, skill upgradation/vocational training centre, power sub-stations, communication posts, and police establishments like police stations/outposts/border outposts/watch towers, in sensitive areas (identified by Ministry of Home Affairs). While granting general approval, the Central Government also considered the fact that such construction of public welfare projects may also involve felling of trees.

To check indiscriminate felling of trees, the Central Government has also prescribed the upper ceiling on number of trees that can be felled to facilitate execution of the public welfare work. Maximum number of trees that can be removed in respected of each project should not exceed fifty per hectare. It has also been stipulated that corresponding permissible limit of maximum number of trees to be felled for the forest area diverted, shall be in proportion to the extent of the diverted area. Further, to mitigate the ill-effects of such felling, it has also been made mandatory for the user agency to plant and maintain two times the number of trees felled on the diverted land at the project cost in consultation with the State Forest Department.

Proposal regarding construction works from Uttaranchal

†1899. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of proposals received for approval during the last two years regarding construction works from Uttaranchal;

(b) whether all these proposals have been approved;

(c) if so, the details of these proposals; and

(d) the details of the proposals approved, so far, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No proposals has been received from Uttaranchal for grant of prior environment clearance for construction works. However, 305 proposals have been received between 1.4.2003 and 11.3.2005 for forestry clearances under the Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

(b) No, Sir. Out of 305 proposals received for forestry clearances, only 192 proposals have been finally approved. 54 proposals have been accorded first stage approval.

(c) Category-wise break-up of the proposals received for forestry clearances is given below:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.